



City of Loma Linda Official Report

Karen Gaio Hansberger, Mayor
Floyd Petersen, Mayor pro tempore
Robert Christman, Councilmember
Stan Brauer, Councilmember
Robert Ziprick, Councilmember

COUNCIL AGENDA: April 26, 2005

TO: City Council

VIA: Dennis R. Halloway, City Manager

FROM: Deborah Woldruff, ^{DP} AICP, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: **GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROJECT** – The project is a comprehensive update to the City's General Plan document (text and maps) that will set policy and guide the City's development over the next twenty years. Areas directly affected by the update project include all properties located within the City's corporate limits, and properties within the City's Sphere of Influence in the County unincorporated areas generally east and south of the City limits to the Redlands City limits and Riverside County Line.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission and staff recommend that the City Council review and approves in concept the Draft Land Use Element (2.0). (Additional recommendations of the Planning Commission and staff are included in the Analysis section of this report.)

Staff also recommends that public testimony be limited to the topic at hand and that no testimony be taken on issues that have not yet been heard by the City Council. [See Attachment A, Draft Land Use Element (2.0)]

BACKGROUND

On April 12, 2005, the City Council reviewed and approved in concept the Conservation and Open Space Element (9.0). The review was conducted in conjunction with the Trails Development Committees' recommendations for trails and open space in the South Hills Area. The Council continued the General Plan Update Project to April 26, 2005 for review of the Draft Land Use Element (2.0).

On April 6, 2005, the Planning Commission completed their review of the Hillside Designation and forwarded it with changes to the City Council. This action concluded the Planning Commission's review process and public hearings on the Draft General Plan. Consequently, the City Council may now review the Land Use Element in its' entirety. A copy of the Planning Commission Staff Report (April 6, 2005) is available in Attachment B.

Further information on the General Plan Update Project (i.e., background information, analysis, environmental, fiscal impacts) is available in the October 12, 2004, November 16, 2004, December 7, 2004, December 14, 2004, January 11, 2005, February 1, 2005, February 8, 2005, February 22, 2005, March 8, 2005, and April 12, 2005 City Council Staff Reports (previously distributed).

ANALYSIS

Residential Designations

The residential land use designations are fairly similar to those that are contained in the existing General Plan. The differences are that the new residential designations are more fully defined through the general text and guiding policies. Their locations are also more accurately depicted on the Proposed General Plan Land Use Map and to a large extent; the residential designations were placed on the map based on the existing densities in established neighborhoods. Counting the Hillside and Hillside Initiative Area Designations, the Draft Land Use Element includes seven residential designations that have varying densities or density ranges. The minimum density allowable in the Draft General Plan is one unit per 10 acres (Hillside Initiative Area) and the maximum is 20 units per one acre [High Density Residential (13.1 to 20 du/ac), and Special Planning Areas]. Further information on the Hillside and Hillside Initiative Area Designations is contained in the following subsection.

Hillside and Hillside Initiative Area Designations

Developing appropriate land use designations for the South Hills Area (excluding the Hillside Initiative Area) has proven to be challenging at best. Over the last three years, staff and the consultant prepared at least four versions and each one was drafted and redrafted several times based on public input and further staff review. The latest version of the Hillside Designation is based on public input received during the joint City Council and Planning Commission meetings that were held on January 11, 2005 and February 1, 2005. The draft document has been further revised based on the Planning Commission's review at their meeting on April 6, 2005.

The Draft Hillside Designation does not rely on a slope density ratio to determine unit yields. Rather, the document proposes to establish densities at one dwelling unit per 5.0 acres or one dwelling unit per 2.0 acres for clustered development in areas not subject to the Hillside Initiative. Areas within the Hillside Initiative retain the allowable density of one dwelling unit per 10 acres or one dwelling unit per 5.0 acres for clustered development. The bench area, located south of Beaumont Avenue and extending southeastward along the railroad right-of-way in the City's Sphere of Influence, is designated as Very Low Density Residential (0.0 to 2.0 du/ac).

The City's land in the South Hills is designated as Public Open Space with a density of zero dwelling units per acre. The draft language also includes goals and policies to encourage the acquisition of additional public open space. Consideration should be given to the Trails Development Committee's recommended open space target area to ensure that public open space has contiguity and trails, connectivity. Other policies in the draft Hillside Designation address the conservation of signature ridges and hillsides, limit grading and other development related activities, and allow density transfer and/or density credit from the Hillside Initiative Area and other sensitive areas. The revisions required by the Planning Commission are incorporated into the current version of the text. Minimum lot sizes in the Hillside Designation are not specified in the Draft Land Use Element because lot size is a function of zoning. By policy, minimum lot size is described as being larger than those found in typical

suburban or urban settings. The Zoning and Subdivision Codes will be updated pending adoption of the Draft General Plan and standards such as minimum lot size will be revised for consistency with General Plan policy.

Prior to the Planning Commission Meeting of April 6th, staff and the consultant researched the regulatory history of land use in the South Hills area since the early 1990s. Our review of related General Plan resolutions and ordinances revealed that the historical records of actions taken on the General Plan are very muddled and confused. Even more troubling is that the land use designations shown on the existing General Plan for the South Hills Area may not accurately depict what has been adopted over the years. Based on the preceding, staff strongly encourages the adoption of a new General Plan to remedy the situation. Further information on this issue is available in Attachment B.

Business and Institutional Designations

The Commercial, Business Park, Office, and Industrial designations are also similar to their counterparts in the existing General Plan. A notable difference in the Draft Land Use Element is that the Loma Linda University (LLU), Loma Linda University Medical Center (LLUMC), and Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Medical Center and other related properties are now covered by three land use designations: 1.) Institutional; 2.) Health Care; and, 3.) Special Planning (SP) Areas. The Institutional designation is for the LLU Campus and allows for the establishment and continuation of institutional and educational uses. The Health Care designation is for the LLUMC properties (including the East Campus area), Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Medical Center property, and related medical office and clinic properties. The SP Areas designation is for the other properties owned by the LLU and LLUMC that are needed for future student and faculty housing, research and development facilities, and other related facilities that do not necessarily fit into the institutional and health care land use categories. A further discussion of the SP Areas Designation is contained below.

Special Planning (SP) Areas (formerly referred to as Mixed-Use)

The Draft Land Use Element includes five general areas in the City that are designated as SP Areas. The draft text states that each area is intended to provide a different variety of uses at varied densities according to its location, access, size, and adjacent land use designations. The intent is to create areas in which a mix of uses can come together to meet the commercial, employment, institutional, and residential needs of the neighborhood and community at large through efficient patterns of land use. The SP Areas Designation will allow for flexibility in determining the specific use of each parcel, as long as the intent of the Land Use Element is maintained to accommodate changing market forces in the future. The five SP Areas are further defined in the Draft Land Use Element text as Areas A through J as shown on Figure 2.2 of the plan.

During their review of the SP Areas, the Planning Commission reduced the maximum allowable densities for attached and detached single-family and multi-family residential uses and the residential uses allowed within vertical and horizontal mixed use areas. The Commission's revisions are included in the draft Land Use Element and the specific SP Areas affected will be presented by the consultant during the meeting on April 26th. The most notable revision made by the Planning Commission was the removal of properties on the east side of California Street from the SP Areas. The properties in the Sphere have been redesignated as Office and Business Park. The block bounded by Barton Road, California Street, Orange Street, and New Jersey Street was split into Commercial (northeast corner of Barton Road and California Street), High Density Residential (Barton Vineyard Project), and Office

(southwest corner of Orange and New Jersey Streets). The northeast corner of Barton Road and New Jersey Street was redesignated as Office.

The Commission's decision to eliminate SP Areas G and J was based on the view, long held by many, that the California Street corridor would be developed with business-park, light industrial, professional and administrative office, commercial service, and retail uses. California Street was considered to be the City's last opportunity to establish additional revenue-generating land uses. However, recent economic feasibility studies and fiscal analyses of the area prepared for the General Plan Update Project and proposed developments in the area have convinced staff that establishment of these types of uses is very unlikely. The studies indicate that buildout of nonresidential uses in the area could take from 30 to 40 years and for some uses, up to 100 years. The studies also indicate that the properties along the California Street corridor have limited capacity for absorption of these types of uses. In many respects, Redlands is far ahead of Loma Linda in attracting and building business-park, office, and light industrial uses. It appears that the California Street corridor is too far removed from the major activity areas in Redlands and freeway access is awkward due the offset intersection at California Street and Redlands Boulevard. After the California Street and Redlands Boulevard intersection is realigned, access to the freeway will continue to be problematic due to the number of trips generated by truck traffic from the warehouse and distribution uses located north of the freeway in Redlands and San Bernardino. The majority of commercial retail uses that serve the area are also located in Redlands. For the reasons stated, the likelihood of turning the California Street area into a major business district is very low.

The studies do indicate that a mix of uses composed of residential uses with limited non-residential uses would meet the current market demand for housing with convenient, neighborhood commercial retail and service uses. The SP Areas proposed for the Mission District area were designed based on these factors. For further information, staff encourages the City Council to revisit the Economic Development Element of the Draft General Plan. In addition, copies of economic feasibility studies and fiscal analyses are included in Attachment E. Based on the preceding, staff does not agree with the Planning Commission's changes to the properties located on the east side of California Street and our recommendation is that the City Council reconsider and reinstate SP Areas G and J.

Land Use Requests from Property Owners

Over the past four years, the City has received several requests from individuals regarding specific land use designations for their respective properties, as follows:

1. *Douglas F. Welebir, Property Owner (Letter, April 15, 2004) – The comments in this letter relate to the inclusion of the author's property in the Hillside Initiative Area on the Proposed General Plan Land Use Map. Several years ago, the property was removed from the Hillside Initiative Area because the majority of it is relatively flat.*

The Planning Commission approved this request because the 1996 amendment to the Hillside Initiative Area removed the Welebir property from the Initiative area. For this reason, the Planning Commission approved Mr. Welebir's request as shown on the Draft Land Use Map.

2. *Ted S. Miller, Property Owner (Letters, August 4, 2004 and September 24, 2004) – requests that his property on the north side of Barton Road, west of University Street be designated for High Density Residential (13.1 to 20 du/ac).*

The Planning Commission approved Mr. Miller's request and the following policy was added to the High Density Residential Designation:

"Conversion of existing single family uses to multi-family development within the High Density Residential area located along the north side of Barton Road at Loma Linda's western city limits shall be contingent upon preparation of a plan for consolidation of existing driveways. Prior to approval of multi-family development, the project sponsors for multi-family development shall demonstrate that:

- Access for proposed multi-family uses will be provided in a safe and efficient manner; and,
- There is sufficient agreement among property owners to implement such a plan."

3. *Pamela Byrnes-O'Camb, City Clerk/Agency Secretary/Housing Coordinator (Letter, October 7, 2004) – requests that the Medium Density Residential Designation (5.1 to 9.0 du/ac) be changed to the High Density Residential Designation (13.1 to 20 du/ac) for the Redevelopment Agency's property located on the east and west sides of Poplar Street between the San Timoteo Creek Channel and just north of Van Leuven Street in the North Central Neighborhood.*

This request was submitted to the Community Development Department after the Planning Commission had forwarded the bulk of the Draft General Plan to the City Council. The Agency has assembled the properties in question with the intent to provide an affordable housing project, which will address the City's affordable housing shortage and deficit.

4. *Robert Frost, Director of Loma Linda University Foundation (LLUF) (Oral, October 13, 2004) – requests that the City reconsider certain aspects of SP Areas B and C. SPA B restricts the Anderson Street frontage to commercial retail uses and should provide opportunities for integration of commercial uses throughout the planning area. SPA C specifies that a future parking structure will be placed west of the existing Ritchie Circle; however, the language should be more general so that the future parking structure can be placed where it is most needed at that time.*

The Planning Commission approved the requests from the LLUF and they have been incorporated into the Draft General Plan, Land Use Element.

Copies of the Letters for Item Nos. 1 through 3 are available for review in Attachment C.

Public Comments

The written comment letters received on the General Plan Update Project and the City's responses are contained in Attachment D.

ENVIRONMENTAL

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance

The General Plan Update Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) has been prepared to evaluate the potential impacts of the

project. The Draft EIR (DEIR) was completed during the latter part of March 2004 and released with the Notice Of Completion and Availability (NOC/A) for public review. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, the 45-day public review period began on Monday, March 22, 2004, and ended on Thursday, May 6, 2004. During the public review period, the City received nine letters of comment on the DEIR. Responses to the letters are contained in the Response to Comments section of the Final Program Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). On Thursday, June 17, 2004, copies of the responses were forwarded to each of the commenters. The Draft Response to Comments document will be scheduled for the City Council's review in late May 2005.

Regional Congestion Management Plan (CMP) Compliance

The project is also subject to the CMP and Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) has been prepared to address the CMP requirements. The CMP TIA will be scheduled for the City Council's review in late May 2005.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Other than the costs associated with the preparation of the Draft General Plan and related environmental documents, the financial impacts of the General Plan Update are not known at this time.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft Land Use Element (April 2005) – *To be distributed on April 25, 2005*
- B. Planning Commission Staff Report (April 6, 2005)
- C. Letters of Request for Specific Land Use Designations
- D. Responses To Letters Of Comment On The Draft General Plan (September 2003 – March 2005)
- E. Economic Feasibility Studies and Fiscal Analyses (4 Reports)

PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED DOCUMENTS

- 1. Draft General Plan (October 2004)
- 2. Draft Existing Setting Report (June 5, 2002)
- 3. Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (March 22, 2004)
- 4. Traffic Impact Analysis (May 13, 2004) (CMP document)
- 5. Draft Final Program Environmental Impact (Report Response to Comments) (June 21, 2004)
- 6. City Council Staff Reports (Previously Distributed - October 12, 2004, November 16, 2004, December 7, 2004, December 14, 2004, January 11, 2005, February 1, 2005, February 8, 2005, February 22, 2005, March 8, 2005, and April 12, 2005)